CROSBY POST

The Private Journal of The British Crosby Society. No.1.(New Series) DECEMBER, 1954.

A Very Happy Christmas to each and every one of you. From: Dot, Jean, Colin and Ron.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS FROM OUR HON.MEMBERS' :-

Dear Readers of Crosby Post, please have a very Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

Most sincerely,

Norman Wisdom

The British Bing Club.

Dear Members,

My greetings to you all and best wishes for the success of the Christmas Edition of Crosby Post.

I am on the eve of leaving for America, where I hope to see my old friend, Bing, with whom I have spent many happy hours and to tell him of the interest and enthusiasm of the Bing Club.

Yours sincerely,

Jack Buchanan.

"It gives me great pleasure to send Heartiest Christmas Greetings and sincere good wishes for the New Year to the members of "The British Bing Club". I hope the Club will flourish under the New Management and that it will enjoy many happy hours of useful activity in 1955."

Yours sincerely,

Ted Ray

Although at the time of going to print we have received no actual Christmas letter from Bing we have had a most encouraging letter asking us to continue the Journal. On behalf of the Club we have sent him a "Beauty of Britain" calendar for his office, these Calendars contain reproductions of famous English Country Scenes and we hope they will remind him of happy holidays here.

The British Crosby Society.

Honorary President.....BING CROSBY.
Hon.Vice-President.....LARRY CROSBY.
Active Co-Presidents.....DOROTHY HARDIMAN .
JEAN RAINEY.
Discologist.....COLIN PUGH.
Editor.....RON DAVIES.

Honorary Members include:-

TED RAY.
NORMAN WISDOM.
RONNIE WALDMAN.
JACK BUCHANAN.
J.K.WILSON.

A LETTER FROM THE DINGLE TUCK SHOP

Dear Friends,

We all know that the Crosby Society is in a rather shaky position financially and I think we members should get together and do something to help. We all admire Bing - he is a great Sportsman, and we should follow his example by giving all the support we can to the people who run a Club in his name.

Dot, Jean and Arthur have worked very hard using their spare time, their own cash and stationery, to keep us regularly supplied with journals. They have done it willingly and without a murmer, and now it is up to us to repay them in any way we can.

I suggest that for the time being we pay our own postage - it isn't much individually and surely we can spare two or even three shillings for such a worthy cause. Please understand that it is I, Lil Williams, making this request, not Dot or Jean. We know that Crosby Clubs' exist in the States, but we prefer our own here in Britain. Let's show them how much we think of Bing by being bigger and better than ever in 1955 !.

A very Happy Christmas to you all.

Sincerely,

LIL WILLIAMS

The Dingle,
Colwyn Bay.

"CROSBY - TOP TEN" (Competition)

Brian Jones of 23 Plas Road, Fleur-de-Lis, Pengam, Mon. (Please note carefully address members) has advised that he has received very few entries for his competition (October issue) and is therefore keeping the closing date open until Dec.31st. What about it Crosby fans ?. He is, after all, offering a prize and deserves better support.

FILM FEATURE: Jean Rainey reviews ...

"W H I T E C H R I S T M A S"

Released by Paramount in "Vista-Vision". Directed by Michael Curtis
With Bing Crosby, Rosemary Clooney, Danny Kaye and Vera-Ellen.
Music by Irving Berlin includes:-
White Christmas/Gee, I Wish I was back in the Army'/Santa Claus Routine/ Sisters/The Old Man/The Best Things Happen While You're Dancing/Snow/ Count Your Blessings/Choreography/Love, You didn't do Right by Me/ What Can You do with a General/Minstrel Show Routine.

After about two years of indecision and delay "White Christmas"has finally arrived. After so much cast changing and story alteration it's a wonder the film runs as smoothly as it does. However to my mind the completed "White Christmas" is well worth the wait and I believe you'll think so too.

Let me say before I start this review, that my fears expressed in an earlier issue of "Crosby Post" about the decision to star Bing and Danny Kaye together were completely unfounded. They make a wonderful team, maybe it's success is due to the fact that Danny is more subdued than usual,but whatever the reason they were great together. There is plenty of give and take all through the film and they both appeared to really enjoy working together. Maybe the fact that I am first, last and always a Crosby fan convinced me that Bing finished up ahead, to me his magical charm, and quiet humour won many a scene which started off by being Danny Kaye's. For instance, in the scene where Danny had just rescued Bing from a falling wall, this was obviously a scene meant for Danny, and he was making the most of it. Bing was playing up to him wonderfully with his usual dead-pan expression but when Bing got up to go and patted Danny on his injured arm as a gesture of farewell, then in my opinion, he stole the scene right from under Danny's nose, maybe you'll think differently. Another unintentional scene-stealing episode came when Bing and Danny were dressed as females singing "Sisters". Now this slapstick stuff is a Kaye speciality, but Bing's facial expressions really broke me up,and when in the end Bing was genuinely laughing at his own efforts as a female impersonator I was convinced that Bing was the champ of the scene. Of course Danny has his moment, notably in the scene where Vera-Ellen proposes to him,and of course in his dancing scenes. No matter what the

critics think of Bing's dancing. I think that for a man who has never pretended to be able to dance, he does jolly well.

Now for the songs. Undoubtedly, the best of the bunch is "Count Your Blessings Instead of Sheep"; which Bing sings to Rosemary Clooney. This song is a natural for Bing and he sings it in that slow easy style which we have come to love so well. Incidentally, some time ago it was reported that the soundtrack from Bing's earlier "HOLIDAY INN" should be used for the song "White Christmas" which Bing sings in the beginning of this film. Either Paramount changed their minds about this or Bing's voice hasn't altered one scrap since 1942, because his voice singing "White Christmas" is exactly the same as his voice singing the other songs in the film. Another song I think you will enjoy is one called "Snow"; which is sung as a quartet by Bing, Danny, Rosemary and Vera-Ellen. What a happy quartet they make, they turned an ordinary song into something really special. There seemed to be complete harmony between all for stars throughout the file and this song is a good example of that harmony.

As I have only had the opportunity to see "White Christmas" once so far, I have not been able to take in all the songs from the film yet. I'll be able to do that after the third or fourth time, but those I have mentioned impressed me most at first hearing. Rosemary Clooney has a very good torch song to sing called : "You Didn't Do Right By Me", which suits her style very much.

To wind up this review I would like to give a word of praise to that grand actor Dean Jagger who has long been a favourite of mine. He gives a very good performance as the general. There is also a girl who plays the general's grand-daughter, I have never seen her before but she impressed me very much, and I hope we see more of her. Altogether "White Christmas" is a first rate film full of good humour, good songs, wonderful colour and "Vista-Vision" is very impressive. On top of all this is Bing, entertaining and thrilling us with that Crosby magic that will never die.

FROM YOU TO ME.....MEMBERS' LETTER PAGE.

Miss Doreen Elliott of Leeds, writes:-

"I have been a member of the Bing Crosby Society for just one year, and would have been longer had I known of its existence sooner. Although only 22, and most of my friends and work-mates are fans to younger singers, to me there never has been or will be anyone half as wonderful as Bing. To say all I'd like to about him would take weeks, and my main reason for writing is to send the enclosed 10/- postal order for another year of "Crosby Post" and to suggest that you increase the membership fee to 10/-. I'm sure all members would agree (It's only 2½d a month extra) and it would make things so much easier for you.

Thanking all concerned for a wonderful job."

(Many thanks, Doreen, for the extra 2/6d contribution towards our Funds, which believe me, is much appreciated. As for raising the Subs., well 10/- is a lot of money but this Journal costs quite a bit to produce. What is your opinion, Members ? - Dot.)

From Johnny Joyce of Wightwick Compton, Staffs...:-

"Congratulations on continuing the "Crosby Club" - I wish you every success. If you'd like me to write an article on Crosby's recordings through the years I'd be happy to oblige providing you'd print it. I don't like work for nothing".

(Neither do we, Johnny - You write it - We'll print it. Ed.)

Frank Murphy of Newcastle, writes:-

"My favourite conversation is Bing talk, yet what does the fabulous name of Bing mean to the younger record collector of today ?.

A few weeks ago, my wife and I entertained two young friends for an evening and after tea we settled down to listen to records; we played a selection of the latest melodies sprinkled with the latest Bing's which our friends enjoyed very much, then I played the new COLUMBIA Long-Playing (33S1036) featuring the Crosby masterpieces "SHINE", "SOME OF THESE DAYS", and "MY HONEY'S LOVING ARMS" etc., and our young friends were amazed at the voice of the young Crosby which they thought was terrific and we were all agreed that Bing was absolutely tops.

In conversation about records I always make my round to Bing and

I've always found that it doesn't matter how much the other person may be against Bing, I can nearly always turn them over to my side, the reason I give for this is the perfectness of Bing the crooner, Bing the film actor, and Bing the family man. He is a combination of greatness which never fades.

In closing these few words about El Bingo I would like to ask you, fellow fans, to boost Bing at every available opportunity, your satisfaction will be your reward, knowing that you are doing your bit to help keep Bing's name in the limelight, the limelight he so richly deserves".

(ANY COMMENT HERE WOULD BE SUPERFLUOUS - Ed.)

THE CROSBY RECORD SHOP - Your Record Wants/Exchanges/Bought & Sold.

Johnny Joyce of 12, Pool Hall Crescent, Wightwick Compton, Staffs, has the following discs for Exchange/Sale:-

Crosbyana Collectors Library (Professional New Micogroove Discs.) All Discs 25/¾ each plus 1/- Postage.

L.P. 33.1/3 Microgroove. Bing Crosby ½ hour show (Guest:Rosemary Clooney) Don't Ever be Afraid to go Home/Come What May/I Love Ma Baby/ Tenderly/Pittsburgh Pennsilvania/Tell Me Why/Just For You/Blue of the Night. (Orch.)

L.P. 33.1/3 Microgroove. Bing 15m. Red Cross Show (Guest:Joe Venuti) /Bob Hope Red Cross Show (Guest: Bing Crosby).

L.P. 33.1/3 (12" disc) Songs from Radio Programme "Birth of the Blues" 1951 - Bing - Dinah Shore - Phil Harris.
Ida/Wait Till the Sun Shines Nellie/Melancholy Baby/Way Down Yonder in New Orleans/Waiter-Porter/St.Louis Blues/Birth of the Blues (Other side copies from V Discs as follows) Small Hotel/Pennies from Heaven/Medley from "Rhythm on the Range"/Amor! Amor! It Could Happen...

L.P. 33.1/3 (12 disc) Bing and Dot Lamour. "Road to Utopia"(Sound Track ½ hour) (10" Disc) "Road to Bali" Sound track plus "Fatherly Advice" . (Bing and Gary).

Also many U.S.A. Decca's deletions etc. - Send wants.

"GUESS THE DATE". - COMPETITION

Johnny Joyce, address above, is offering as a prize a Test Pressing Single-sided Long Playing 33.1/3 "Road to Bali" 3 songs Chicago Style/ Road to Bali/To See You is to Love You (Mint) disc....

To the member who guesses the correct or near correct date of the original Paul Whiteman Orchestra (Rhythm Boys and Irene Taylor) recording of "Mississippi Mud". The record will go to the member whose first correct answer is opened or failing correct date the nearest will get same.

All correspondence in connection with this competition should be addressed to Johnny Joyce.

As promised last month we have pleasure in printing the first instalment of :-

"MY FOUR SONS - AND ME" by BING CROSBY

My one regret today is that my wife, Dixie, is no longer with us to take the credit for our four boys. In my particular distionary, courage was the other word for Dixie. She had so much of it that it numbed all her pain and much of the anguish of those who saw her go so quickly, so very bravely. The heritage she left when she died of cancer was a rich one; an ineffaceable memory of herself and four healthy,normal young boys. We miss her love, her steadfast and constructive support.

/Gary,

Gary, Dennis, Philip and Lindsay are so closely identified with me that many people forget it was Dixie Crosby who brought them up and moulded them into the well-adjusted young men they are today. I can say quite frankly that were it not for those sons of ours I would be completely lost. Their affection and respect, their spirit, good humour and companionship have filled a void that seemed bottomless when Dixie died two years ago.

Dixie and I had always intended that our boys would be raised as four average American kids, and I think that's the way it's come out. They all like the entertainment field, but I never tried to influence them one way or the other about it, and I guess possibly only Gary, who is now twenty-one, is serious about wanting to make a real career of it. The twins, Dennis and Phil, are studying animal husbandry at Washington State College, and they'll probably take over our ranch in North Fork, Nevada. They're twenty. Lindsay, who goes to Loyola College is sixteen, and though he's talented in more ways than one I can't figure out what he'll turn out to be. Sometimes he says he'll be an artist. Lately he's been talking about the priesthood.

Gary had his own show on the radio last summer, and I warned him; "No matter how you make out, you go right back to Stanford University after it's all over. If you do better than either of us thinks you can, I'll retire and become your agent".

He's Bing all over, weighs nearly 21st. and looks less like a singer than a fullback. That's the position he played in college football until he broke his collarbone and they found it wouldn't stay in place if he kept on playing. I'd like to see him go on a diet, but what can you do when the whole structure is muscle ?. Now that he doesn't play football he's become interested in baseball, and it's quite a catcher.

The twins are more like Dixie than the other boys, and I think it was they who missed her most when she passed away. They're a little taller than I am, and physically they're lightweight stuff compared with Gary. Mentally they do very nicely. Phil, who has the most sensitive face, most resembles Dixie. Dennis is the handsomest of the four. I think either one of the twins is talented enough to find a spot in show business, both sing and play the trumpet - but they are leaving it to Gary to hold up that end. Their interest is outdoors.

Most serious-minded of the four is Lin. If you listen to my brother Everett, Gary has more talent than the twins and Lin has more than Gary. Lin is a good public speaker, and claims he picked that up from me. One thing I know: Lin's a good actor. He's very clever musically and probably more than any of the four boys, has inherited the particular brand of humour usually associated with me - casual and occasionally original. He can ad-lib with me like Bob Hope, and correspondingly I don't always come out best. He plays the piano. Taught himself without lessons. I think he has terrific savoir-faire, and certainly he's much older than his sixteen years.

While the other three boys can dismiss a problem lightly - and often do - Lin views everything with grown-up gravity. I'll never forget one day when he and I were lunching with Johnny Burke, the songwriter and a close friend of the family. For no reason any of us can recall the talk turned to Dixie and Catholicism. "Well," said Lin, "Just the desire alone can make you a Catholic. I believe that Mommy desires it and just doesn't want to tell you how easy she is to win over".

All four boys, if they often neglect their attire take good care of their physical appearances. For instance, they keep their hair in better trim than they do their shoes. And they're happier in cowpoke boots than in anything else.

They have their fights - real knock-down-and-drag-out fights. These are always outside, often between the four of them. If it gets too rough I get in to separate them, but that's rare. They face their individual problems determindly and ruggedly, and deal with them accordingly. And, apart from a few minor bruises and lots of halting breath, their solutions are usually good and conclusive. Most important, there are never any hard feelings for very long.

I have worried unendingly about the job I have done bringing up my boys. I still don't really know. Once when I was congratulating myself that I'd done pretty well a friend of mine warned me: "Don't start getting any false impressions about what you've taught the kids. They're the ones who have taught you." And how they did it I'll never know. No

one else has ever been able to". He wasn't a hundred per cent serious, but as I look back on it I think I know what he meant.

One of the things I'm most grateful for is that the boys' devotion to their parents was equally divided between Dixie and myself. There probably wasn't a prouder mother in all the world when Philip won an elocution contest on the subject of "Taking Mother to a Football Game". Shortly before Dixie died another of the boy's wrote not hundreds but thousands of words in a eulogy called "To Mother".

Things like this would bring me suddenly in front of a mirror. And I would ask myself "What have you done for her lately ?. You go away a lot. How long since you have written to her ? Or confided to her something that was on your mind ?".

It was something to repair, and after these two incidents I did some repairing.

(To be continued next month).

THE CROSBY WAXWORKS. By Colin Pugh.

I must start with an apology for an error I made last month when listing the Columbia Extended Play issue. In addition to the three titles I gave, it also contains "Happy-Go-Lucky-You" which also happens to be as much sought after as "Love Me To-night" by many collectors. In fairness to myself I should explain that when my article was written the early advice from Columbia of their intention to issue this E.P. disc was only just in the dealers' hands and the mistake was theirs in the first place in omitting the fourth title. The price of this 45 RPM disc including Purchase Tax is 9/3½d not 11/3½d as stated in the November "Post".

And what a splendid pressing this E.P. is after the noisy hissing surfaces we have suffered hitherto when playing the equivalent 78's. This vast improvement of course, applies to all L.P's and I for one am heartily glad - as I am sure are all collectors who have gone in for L.P. - to know that the days of 78 RPM shellac pressing are numbered. In fact, for we who only collect Bing they are already over, which brings me to the next point, that of Brunswick's new 45's. In case your dealer has forgotten to let you know, you will be pleased to learn that as from October of this year, all Bing's Brunswick issues on 78's will also be available on 7" 45 RPM discs, and at the same price. These 45's are made of the same material and have the same characteristics as 33 .⅓ L.P.'s. They have the same catalogue numbers as their equivalent 78's but are identified by 45 before the number, i.e. 45-C5224. To launch their enterprise in the field of 45's in the country, Brunswick have included half-a-dozen recent 78 issues of Bing, to also make available on 45's. I've given all the titles involved in recent reviews, so it will suffice if I list the catalogue numbers affected, which are as follows:-

05224 : 05244 : 05269 : 05277 : 05304 : 05315.

I believe your late editor - Arthur Allen - recently cited the many advantages obtained from L.P. but for the benefit of any who as yet still haven't experienced this benefit I would like to emphasise the major point - that of the silent surface. In the past, the playing of a Record was always heralded by the "plonk" in the speaker of the needle dropping into the first groove, followed by a hiss - as of steadily pouring rain, which was shortly after joined by whatever speech or music was recorded thereon. If we concentrated on the music, the surface hiss to which we had become accustomed over the years was not so apparent. But if we concentrated on the "hiss", there was no mistaking its intensity. At the conclusion of the Record the "pouring rain" won the battle by outlasting the music and would give a victory roll in the centre - "swwosh, swoosh", until the automatic stop or auto-change mechanism decided to give us a repeat performance of the "pouring rain" act on the next record. The point I wish to make by a ll, is that all the time, you were very much aware that you were listening to a gramophone record. This is not so with L.P. and by L.P. I mean 45' Extended Play and 33 1/3rd discs. Providing you have kept your L.P. records free from dust as you are supposed to do, and that your sapphire is not unduly worn, you are not aware that a Record is being played until the music or voice commences, as it then does clearly, and free from background noise. This makes for a far greater illusion that you are listening to a live performance and it brings the old groaner right into your room. In short, you no longer "listen to a record", you listen to the music instead.

/And now we

And now we have Extended Play on Brunswick, which now offers us Bing in four mediums : 78's : 45's : E.P. and L.P. All we want to complete the set is "Tape" !. The price of a Brunswick E.P. is 10/7½d which, although a little dearer than a Columbia E.P., is still slightly cheaper than the equivalents in 78's. In fact, the advent of E.P. brings us Long Play Quality for the first time, at a price which is less than the total on 78's. This fact alone should do much to popularise them; and indeed, all L.P's should work out cheaper than 78's for the manufacturers have only one disc to price and supply instead of four, even allowing a bit extra for more costly material which we'll assume Vinylite to be.

Brunswick's first issues of Bing on E.P. is entitled "Bing Sings the Hits" which is an abbreviation of its older namesake on L.P. Now don't get excited; of course they didn't include "Vaya Con Dios". This would have bumped up their sales of this E.P. with people who can't afford the L.P., and they don't want that do they ? or do they ?!!. It would really pay the Decca Company to approach any of the many big Crosby collectors for opinions on the matter of releases, issues, couplings and groupings, etc., and they would receive practical honest, and free advice from men who "live" with their Records. But there it is, you can't teach an old dog new tricks. The catalogue number of this E.P. is OE9003 and the four titles thereon are:- Young at Heart/Oh Baby Mine/ Secret Love/My Love, My Love. As those of you who have bought the L.P. of "BING SINGS THE HITS"will know, Bing does a wonderful job on "Vaya Con Dios". A really outstanding rendition, and without doubt, the best version by any artist to date. After hearing everyone else's hackneyed stereotyped versions for the last twelve months, I didn't quite realise what a fine song this is, until Bing imparted a warmth and meaning into it that must have even surprised the composers. Bing's diction on this made me realise that it was the first time I'd heard the title pronounced correctly, with long O's.

I'm rather putting the "cart before the horse" this month, for just prior to the E.P. issue, we had a 78 release on Brunswick of two songs from Bing's film "WHITE CHRISTMAS" - Count Your Blessings instead of Sheep/What Can you do with a General. The number is 05339 and don't forget its also on 45-05339. Both songs are with Joseph J.Lilley and his Orchestra but I can't review them this month for realising that this solitary disc could not be all we should get from the film so prolific with songs as "WHITE CHRISTMAS", I waited for the L.P.

(TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT ISSUE)

An 'X' Here

Indicates that your membership expires before the next issue of the Journal. Please remit immediately, to:-

Mrs.D.Hardiman,
1/17, New Street,
SMETHWICK,
Staffs.

The Editor's Address is:-

99, Caulfield Road,

LONDON, E.6.

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